

Anaconda

A Flawed Joint Planning Process

By RICHARD B. ANDRES and JEFFREY B. HUKILL

Over the last 5 years, Operation *Anaconda* has gained legendary status as a debacle. While the operation *did* experience problems, these problems did not occur for the reasons commonly given. The objective of the mission was to kill or capture Taliban and al Qaeda fighters based in the Shahi-Kot Valley. It succeeded at this task: the coalition killed nearly 800 al Qaeda at a cost of 8 American dead. However, this success occurred only after initial mistakes on the first day forced coalition ground forces to retreat from the valley and may have allowed al Qaeda leaders to escape to Pakistan.

These and other problems stemmed from a flawed air-ground planning process that systematically excluded air component planners and leaders. In the months leading up to the operation, the combined joint task force (CJTF) made numerous decisions not to include experienced air component planners or their ideas for employing airpower. Similarly, while the CJTF communicated with ground commanders about the mission on nearly a daily basis for almost 2 months, joint leaders did not discuss the mission with the air component commander until 2 days before the scheduled D-Day. As a result, airpower was not properly integrated into the plan, contributing directly to a near reversal of fortunes during the first day of combat.

The shortcomings in *Anaconda's* planning are not widely understood even by those who fought the battle. Six months after the operation, in an interview published in *Field Artillery*, Major General Franklin Hagenbeck, USA, the operation's joint force commander (JFC), argued that many of the problems stemmed from the air component's mistakes. Hagenbeck agreed to retract these charges when they were revealed to be inaccurate.¹ Unfortunately, perhaps because of the inter-Service rancor aroused by the article, the Services let the issue drop rather than reexamining the underlying causes that gave rise to the problems. As a result, the military has largely accepted Hagenbeck's retracted but unanswered explanation.

Because *Anaconda's* planning problems have not been publicly acknowledged, they have yet to be corrected. Today, air component planners report that JFCs consistently fail to integrate lessons learned into planning processes until the last minute and that this often results in the vast network of Air Force, Navy, and Marine air, space, and cyber assets being underutilized or even unused in combat. Joint commanders' reluctance to include the air component in planning is based in deeply rooted Service culture, education, and training. The Services cannot correct this problem until they address its history and acknowledge that operations work best when all components are

Left: Soldiers from 10th Mountain Division prepare to dig into fighting positions during Operation *Anaconda*

Below: Smart bombs from B-52 destroy enemy positions



55th Signal Company, Combat Camera (Andres J. Rodriguez)

brought in at the start of the planning process and are fully represented in planning cells.

This article explores why planning for *Anaconda* fell short. The Services' 6-year refusal to discuss the operation has led to a festering inter-Service wound. It is our hope that this critical analysis of *Anaconda* will begin an open debate that will be a first step toward fixing an air-ground planning process that remains broken.

The Battle

On March 2, 2002, after 2 months of planning, coalition troops streamed into Afghanistan's Shahi-Kot Valley expecting a 3-day battle against a small and surprised Taliban and al Qaeda force. Instead, they found an enemy force 5 to 10 times larger than anticipated that was manning concealed positions with heavy weapons sighted on likely approaches and helicopter landing zones.

Unlike the operations of the previous 5 months in Afghanistan—and against the air

Richard B. Andres is Professor of Security Studies at the U.S. Air Force School of Advanced Air and Space Studies and currently serves as a Special Assistant to the Secretary of the Air Force. Lieutenant Colonel **Jeffrey B. Hukill, USAF (Ret.)**, is Senior Military Doctrine Analyst in the Warfighter Education Directorate at the Air Force Doctrine Development and Education Center, Maxwell Air Force Base. Lieutenant Colonel Hukill is also coauthor of the Chief of Staff of the Air Force-directed Operation *Anaconda* Case Study.

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liaison officer's (ALO's) recommendation for heavy bombing—the plan called for only light preparation of the battlefield through airstrikes. Commanders called off even most of these strikes a few minutes into the bombing when a U.S. Special Operations Force (SOF) team in the area that had not coordinated its presence with the CJTF radioed for a bombing halt for fear of being hit. Meanwhile, an AC-130 gunship supporting the coalition's main force of several hundred Afghan troops led by other SOF accidentally killed 1 American and 2 friendly Afghan soldiers, while injuring 17 others. Ignorant of the plan until the last minute, and taking fire from enemy mortars, Afghan commanders lost confidence and retreated.

U.S. helicopters then inserted approximately 200 members of Task Force Rakkasan into positions from which they could block enemy escape routes through the narrow mountain passes leading from the valley.² The force immediately came under heavy fire and withdrew, leaving most of the passes as avenues of escape or reinforcement for the enemy. American commanders cancelled the second wave of 200 troops who were to reinforce the mountain passes. Intelligence suggested that hundreds of enemy combatants poured into the valley, and it is unclear if high-value al Qaeda leadership fled from the valley to nearby Pakistan at that time.

With friendly forces under heavy, accurate fire, the JFC, General Hagenbeck, attempted to use his Apache attack helicopters to suppress enemy fire. Flying low over the mountain terrain in daylight, the vulnerable helicopters took intense fire, rendering them unable to provide sustained support.³ With the plan falling apart, the task force changed its basic concept of operations to rely heavily on fixed-wing aircraft.

Over the next few days, significant numbers of Air Force, Navy, and Marine aircraft flowed into the battle. However, contrary to joint doctrine, joint force planners in Afghanistan had failed to integrate air experts into the planning effort. As a result, for the critical first 2 days of combat, controllers were unable to make full use of the airpower that orbited above the valley. Because planners had not requested a change to the standing rules of engagement (ROE) for airpower before the battle, aircraft could only engage targets on the ground in restricted circumstances. Attacking time-sensitive targets, such as al Qaeda personnel entering or leaving the valley, required

lengthy real-time coordination with command staffs in the United States.⁴

As the operation continued, the air component rapidly jury-rigged an air control network. Over the course of the battle, the Air Force, Navy, and Marines dropped more ordnance on the Shahi-Kot Valley than had been used during the previous 5 months in Afghanistan. On March 11, after more than

the Khowst-Gardez region of Afghanistan. Early estimates placed the number of enemy combatants between 1,500 and 2,000.⁶ On January 5, General Tommy Franks, USA, the USCENTCOM commander, tasked the Combined Forces Land Component Commander (CFLCC), Lieutenant General Paul Mikolashek, to plan for defeating enemy forces in that region. Mikolashek subsequently ordered the 5th Special Forces

after 2 months of planning, coalition troops found an enemy force 5 to 10 times larger than anticipated that was manning concealed positions

a week of tough fighting, enemy resistance ended. The American toll stood at 8 killed and 48 wounded, while the enemy toll was 517 confirmed dead and another 250 probably killed. According to the operation's commander, precision weapons delivered from the air were responsible for most of the enemy casualties.⁵ Airpower's contribution was significant, but the failure to include it in the planning process had been costly.

Planning Anaconda

The problems with airpower integration at *Anaconda* began long before the battle. In early January 2002, 2 months after the fall of the Taliban regime, reports filtered into U.S. Central Command (USCENTCOM) that a pocket of Taliban and al Qaeda fighters was assembling in

Group commander, Colonel John Mulholland, USA, who was also the Joint Special Operations Task Force North (JSOTF-N) commander, to begin initial planning.

Mulholland's SOF team had been planning and conducting joint operations in Afghanistan for the previous few months and, working with the air component and indigenous Afghan forces, had defeated tens of thousands of enemy combatants. A month later, Mulholland was asked to turn planning for the operation over to the 10th Mountain Division commander, General Hagenbeck, on the assumption that the division would be better than the JSOTF-N at integrating the large joint force. Over the next few weeks, the 10th Mountain Division, which would form the core of CJTF Mountain, refined the *Anaconda*



Soldiers from 101st Airborne Division unload from Chinook, Operation Anaconda

551 Signal Company, Combat Camera (Keith D. McGrew)

plan.⁷ For reasons that remain controversial, CJTF Mountain downgraded the SOF and air component's estimate of the expected number of enemy combatants from 1,500–2,000 to 150–200 and removed the planned integrated air operations.⁸ The CJTF subsequently ignored or rejected appeals by the division's isolated ALO to utilize airborne intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance (ISR) and to attack known enemy positions with airstrikes before the ground assault.

One of the more debatable aspects of the planning process for *Anaconda* involves the CJTF decision not to include the Combined Forces Air Component Commander (CFACC) in planning. For obscure reasons, as the CJTF planned the operation, Generals Mikolashek and Hagenbeck, the CFLCC and JFC respectively, chose not to tell the CFACC, Lieutenant General Michael Moseley, about the operation during the months of planning and waited until 2 days before the scheduled D-Day to ask for his input, even though the land component commander discussed other matters with him almost daily and this was to be the largest planned operation in Afghanistan at the time.⁹ By the time the CFACC was pulled in, it was too late to change the plan. With only 2 days until the operation commenced, it was nearly inevitable that Moseley's desire for more time for the air component to prepare would not be met.¹⁰

Although the CJTF planners did not ask the air component to participate in planning, the air component staff made efforts to engage. The joint air coordination element attached to Task Force Dagger had been executing air operations throughout Operation *Enduring Freedom* and had frequent contact with the 10th Mountain Division. Throughout January and February, they repeatedly requested that 10th Mountain Division accept the six- to eight-man tactical air control party (TACP) that the new joint task force would need to integrate planning with the air component. These attempts included personal appeals to the 10th Mountain Division's chief of staff, as well as hand-delivered written requests for forces on several occasions. These appeals were declined.¹¹

The CJTF commander has provided a number of reasons for declining the TACP, a dispute that began the previous October. Originally, USCENTCOM charged the 10th Mountain Division only with providing base security. As a result, although it was going against joint procedures, the division argued it would not need airpower. Later, however, when the division's mission changed and when

it was planning for *Anaconda* in January 2002, General Hagenbeck continued to reject air planners. The division's chief of staff argued that Department of Defense–instituted force caps for Afghanistan would have required the already undermanned task force to send some of its own men home. Yet since the tiny TACP would have provided access to the integrated airpower of Air Force, Navy, and Marine assets in the region, a strong case can be made that it would have proven to be far more valuable to the division than the equivalent number of ground troops.

Given the U.S. military's long history of inadequate jointness, CJTF Mountain's reluctance to include air planners is not surprising. The CJTF's actions in this case highlight an institutional problem. Military education and

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training do little to emphasize the integration of airpower into joint operations beyond the tactical level. Army doctrine in particular tends to relegate airpower to a supporting role. Campaign planning courses seldom include more than cursory lessons on airpower's role on the battlefield. Equally important, airpower plays little role in joint training exercises at the Army's National Training Center at Fort Irwin, California. This gives land commanders and planners the false impression that airpower will be available whether it is included in planning or not and fails to give them an accurate understanding of the useful effects that air, space, and cyber assets can bring to a battle when integrated into planning from the start.

Whatever its causes, the failure to integrate the air component into the planning process for *Anaconda* led to cascading errors. Postbattle interviews suggest that not only did the operation's planners not understand how to use air assets, but they also had only a vague understanding about what airpower capabilities were available.

The resulting errors in *Anaconda* fall into five major categories, each of which could have been avoided had the CJTF included the air component from the beginning of the planning effort.

Error 1: Poor Intelligence Preparation of the Battlefield. The CJTF did not make good use of air- and space-borne ISR assets. By 2002, air- and space-borne sensors had the capability to penetrate darkness, weather, and even sand storms, and could determine an object's location within feet.

Given time, air- and space-borne sensors, by collecting against an unaware adversary, could have provided a better assessment of enemy strength in the Shahi-Kot region and the location of caves and concealed heavy weapons emplacements; moreover, in conjunction with human and cyber intelligence collection assets, sensors could have provided a better assessment of the adversary's likely course of action if attacked. Lacking this full array of sensors, CJTF Mountain's intelligence cell relied mainly on human intelligence—mostly the testimony of local Afghans.¹² If the air component had been fully integrated in the planning process, airborne ISR assets would likely have revealed not only that the larger initial reports were correct, but also that enemy forces had dispersed into concealed fighting positions around the valley in anticipation of an attack.

The problem with air and space intelligence preparation of the battlefield, however, was not purely mechanical. Even in the short time that the air component had to concentrate on the *Anaconda* area prior to battle, air and space collection assets managed to identify 22 enemy fighting positions and 40 cave entrances in the valley.¹³ Yet for what may have been bureaucratic reasons, ground planners declined the division ALO's recommendation to strike even these targets, and in a postbattle interview, the JFC pointed out that he was unaware of this intelligence.

Error 2: Underestimating Airpower Deployment Time. Just as an army moves at the head of a logistical train, airpower too deploys with troops, supplies, and equipment needed to sustain operations. Failure to integrate air planners into the effort contributed to the mistaken belief that, even without preparation, the right mix of airpower would come together at the right place and time over the battlefield.

Although the distances involved only mildly hampered long-range Air Force bombers, beginning the battle with land-based fighter aircraft deployed near the battlefield would have considerably improved both close air support response time and forward air controller capability. As it was, the air component moved its A-10 strike aircraft forward during

the battle, but doing so was extremely difficult for diplomatic reasons, and they missed the crucial first 2 days of combat.¹⁴ This was particularly problematic because, without an Air Support Operations Center at Bagram, these aircraft were needed to play a critical role in coordinating airpower during the battle.

Air Force refueling tankers would have benefited from more time as well. Tankers were critical to *Anaconda* because of the distances that attack aircraft flew to reach the battlefield and because aerial refueling allowed aircraft to orbit for hours over the battlefield providing on-call support to troops below. Without tankers, Navy fighters based on carriers 500 miles away could not have reached the battlefield. The refueling of *Anaconda* support aircraft also had to be scheduled with other combat, intelligence, and transport refueling priorities throughout the Middle East. Basing and overflight rights for the bombers, fighters, tankers, and transports supporting operations in landlocked Afghanistan required additional setup time.

Some of the heaviest fighting during *Anaconda* occurred while the Navy was replacing one of its carriers in the area and there was only one rather than the usual two carriers available for operations. This swap could have been rescheduled. Moreover, the carrier that was in the region was having a “picnic day” on deck when *Anaconda* started.¹⁵ If the Combined Air Operations Center (CAOC) had been included in the planning, these problems would not have occurred.

Although lack of aircraft did not turn out to be a problem at *Anaconda*, this was by chance alone, and distances did substantially reduce fighters’ ability to provide forward air control capabilities during the first 2 days of combat. Better coordination could have easily averted these missteps. While airpower is flexible and can deploy rapidly, like any other form of combat power, it is more effective if afforded sufficient time for planning.

Error 3: Lack of Tactical Coordination for Close Air Support. The third major error was the failure to build a robust means of coordinating between the land and air component during the battle. Over the years, the United States has developed intricate processes and organizations manned by highly trained Airmen to make close air support work. When properly set up, the process for requesting air support responds rapidly to the needs of ground troops.

During *Anaconda*, CJTF Mountain had only a limited ability to coordinate with the

air component. With a division headquarters rather than a corps headquarters forming its core, CJTF Mountain did not have the same robust capability for managing and prioritizing airpower that would reside in a corps-level Air Support Operations Center. Under these circumstances, the division should have made substantial efforts to increase its air integration capability but did not. Left out of the planning effort, theater air leadership scrambled in the final days before *Anaconda* to cobble together a tactical air coordination system. Initially, CJTF Mountain did not realize that it lacked even the radio and satellite equipment needed to coordinate close air support. A number of quick-thinking Airmen rapidly established an ad hoc air coordination center, which became minimally functional only hours before *Anaconda* began and built a killbox plan by day four of the engagement. As a result, although close air support was extremely responsive and the average delay time was only 5 minutes across the entire operation, air planners have described the lack of fratricide as a miracle, and early in the battle there were far more aircraft in the sky than control networks on the ground could adequately use.

Error 4: Lack of Operational- and Strategic-level Coordination. A fourth error

initially, CJTF Mountain did not realize that it lacked even the radio and satellite equipment needed to coordinate close air support

that could have been alleviated by involving the air component in planning was a lack of operational- and strategic-level coordination. The heart of theater-level airpower planning and execution is the CAOC, which allows the CFACC to exercise command and control over air- and space-based systems, provides a unified picture of the battlefield, and serves as a link between the strategic, operational, and tactical levels of war. This link is essential given the inherently global nature of air- and space power. Satellites, long-range bombers, and heavy transports are seldom under the direct control of battlefield commanders since they may be required in different theaters on different days. ROE set in the United States must be coordinated with bomb-droppers, often in real time, by the CAOC. Knowing what information to collect and which assets are available to collect it, and then routing that information from sensors to users requires technology and organizations that are built into the CAOC.

Tapping into CAOC resources and expertise would have called for senior-level coordination between the land and air components. By failing to make the CFACC aware of the operation until almost the last minute and only minimally coordinating even then, the CJTF blinded itself to some of the most important factors influencing the battle. The CJTF did not fully understand, for instance, when carrier aircraft would be available, how to utilize airborne ISR, what kind of diplomatic issues surrounded air basing, or how the limitations of theater-wide ROE prevented aircraft from descending below specific altitudes and required pilots to seek direct permission from



Soldier scans countryside for enemy targets

U.S. Army (David Marek, Jr.)

USCENTCOM headquarters in Tampa before striking targets other than those associated with defensive close air support or in open engagement zones. Finally, had airpower been properly coordinated, CJTF Mountain would have been better able to leverage air- and space-borne ISR assets commanded by the CAOC.

Error 5: Failure to Consider Airpower.

If air leaders and planners had been included from the start of the *Anaconda* planning process, the entire concept of operations might have been different. According to the plan, Afghan forces were to move into the valley from the north and south, acting as hammers to drive enemy fighters into the mountain passes to the east. In this plan, Afghan fighters were to be used as conventional troops, which was a different role from previous battles where Afghans mainly mopped up after heavy bombing. SOF and air planners had been conducting operations in Afghanistan using indigenous forces for almost half a year. They understood that using untrained tribal fighters as a hammer against prepared enemy positions without extensive preparatory airstrikes was an overly optimistic course of action. Based on their experience at Tora Bora and elsewhere, SOF and air planners also understood that al Qaeda troops generally fought to the death.

The plan called for helicopters to insert U.S. light infantry into the passes to prevent the enemy from escaping, becoming the anvil to the Afghan force's hammer. The CJTF brought in only eight Apache attack helicopters for air support under the assumption that the need for fixed-wing support would be minimal and that these assets would be available if needed. The Apache is a marvel of modern technology; however, it was ill suited for this mission. The altitude of the terrain upon which *Anaconda* took place—as high as 10,000 feet—degraded the Apache's performance. Its hovering-while-firing tactic made it a sitting duck for small arms fire. Like most helicopters, the Apache is highly vulnerable when operating close to the ground in mountainous terrain over concentrations of enemy infantry. The damage these aircraft sustained from ground fire confirmed this susceptibility. In addition, the plan underestimated the amount of airpower the operation would call for. In the end, winning the battle required hundreds of times more air-dropped ordnance than the helicopters could have provided.

The plan called for only 30 minutes of airstrikes against 13 predetermined targets to soften up enemy positions. General Hagenbeck

declined the more extensive pre-attack bombardment recommended by the air component, arguing in an interview after the battle that there were “few, if any, fixed targets” to hit; he had not wanted to bomb the enemy's caves because they might otherwise yield intelligence; he had

mission, which aimed at killing or capturing al Qaeda leadership and followers, and a senior advocate could have pointed out that preparatory airstrikes were essential when using Afghan troops. Air planners could also have clarified that precision bombs are relatively inexpensive

the air component had discovered dozens of potential targets and had, apparently unbeknownst to the joint force commander, recommended these to division planners

not wanted to waste the limited stock of precision bombs; and he feared that a long period of preparatory bombing would scare away the enemy.¹⁶

If air leaders had been involved in the planning from the beginning, however, they could have offered alternative viewpoints. For instance, the air component had discovered dozens of potential targets and had, apparently unbeknownst to the JFC, recommended these to division planners. Moreover, gathering intelligence was not a stated objective of the

and that they were not in short supply. Finally, air planners could have advised that if surprise was important, a compressed and intense period of strikes—less than the allocated 30 minutes—could have generated the desired effects.

Another issue that air planners might have been able to address is that the plan treated airpower solely as fires, which is how Army doctrine portrays fixed-wing capabilities. Airpower could have been better integrated into the plan if planners had realized that Air Force, Navy, and Marine fixed-wing



airpower, like Army rotary-wing aircraft, can be employed as a maneuver force. In doing so, they might have used airpower to block enemy escape routes and mask friendly movements.

After the first few days of fighting, *Anaconda* reverted to the air-ground arrangement that had existed between SOF and airpower during previous months in Afghanistan: infantry locating enemy positions and air-strikes destroying them. Airpower became a maneuver force blocking enemy movement. Joint planners, however, could and should have created this synergy from the outset.

Analysis and Recommendations

With the above background in mind, there are three important lessons the Services can take away from *Anaconda*.

Future joint planning cells will require equal air component representation. *Anaconda*'s planning problems stemmed from lack of sufficient air component representation in the CJTF. Although the division's ALO provided much of the information the task force needed for planning, his voice was routinely marginalized, and significant intelligence that he provided does not appear to have made it up to the JFC. Planning is a bureaucratic and political as well as technical process. A single Air Force lieutenant colonel does not have enough access in a division planning cell to make a case for airpower to senior Army planners and commanders, particularly when culture, education, and training militate against the solutions he offers. At its core, planning is about choosing from a menu of means to achieve specified ends. Until the air component is represented at approximately the same level as the land component on joint task force planning staffs, the options it offers will go unheeded.

Senior leaders must push for air component participation in planning. The CJTF had many opportunities to include the air component. The CFLCC spoke regularly with the CFACC in the months leading up to the battle but chose not to inform him of the impending operation. The CJTF chief of staff or the JFC could have accepted one of the air component's proffered coordination elements, such as a TACP, either at the time of deployment or after the division was given the *Anaconda* mission. Generals Franks, Mikolashek, and Hagenbeck each had the doctrinal authority to inform the air component commander about the mission and ask him to contribute. Among the CJTF's lower-ranking joint planners and leaders—given problems with Service

culture, education, and training—it would have required intentional and strong leadership to change the ground-centric mission-planning mindset. Joint commanders must reach across to other component commanders, and down to their own staffs, to begin to take advantage of the capabilities airpower can bring to a fight.

Joint education and training must be updated to include airpower's new capabilities. The method that the CJTF used to integrate airpower into the operation and the concept of operations it selected revealed a lack of understanding about modern airpower. This is understandable. Airpower's capabilities and roles on the battlefield have evolved significantly over the last two decades. New air- and space-based sensors and networks have the capability to provide a picture of the battlefield that would have been science fiction 20 years ago. Precision bombs have as much in common with their World War II predecessors as M16 rifles have with longbows. Yet these capabilities are only useful if joint commanders know they exist, understand their potential, and are willing to cross Service lines to tap them. Joint culture, education, and training have not kept up with changes in airpower capabilities. Until they do, it is unlikely that ground planners will see the value in recruiting or listening to their air component peers.

Over the last half decade, few Airmen or Soldiers have been willing to discuss *Anaconda* in open inter-Service forums. Neglect, however, has neither caused the issue to go away nor cured the underlying problem. Over the years, air planners and air commanders returning from Afghanistan and Iraq have consistently protested that the planning system continues to exclude air planners. When air planners are included, they are invited in small numbers, are of significantly lower rank than their land component counterparts, and are often only called in well into the planning process.

Ground component planners often see the effects of this neglect without realizing its cause. As a result, land component planners and leaders returning from the field often argue that Soldiers should not rely too heavily on airpower, that airpower is often late to the fight, that it is mainly a kinetic instrument, and that it is poorly integrated into the ground scheme of maneuver. However, what they often do understand is that, when these things occur, they are frequently a direct consequence of lack of air component representation in planning. These problems will only go away when joint

commanders make integrating the air component into the planning processes a top priority.

America's joint forces are phenomenal. Using them to their full potential, however, will require integrating all of the components into the planning process. A first step toward this is exploring and debating operations such as *Anaconda* to determine what we could be doing better. **JFQ**

NOTES

¹ For a point-by-point technical analysis and refutation of General Hagenbeck's arguments, see Benjamin S. Lambeth, *Airpower against Terror: America's Conduct of Operation Enduring Freedom* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND, 2005), 204–221.

² Task Force Rakkasan consisted of the 1–187 Infantry and 2–187 Infantry from the 101st Airborne Division and the 1–87 Infantry of the 10th Mountain Division, as well as helicopters and the 3^d Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry.

³ Five of the seven helicopters were forced to return to base due to battle damage. Twenty-seven of the 28 rotor blades for the Apache force had bullet holes. Five of the helicopters were flying again within 24 hours. Two were damaged to the extent that they had to be airlifted out of the theater to the United States for repair. Lambeth, 181.

⁴ Headquarters of the U.S. Air Force, *Operation Anaconda: An Airpower Perspective*, February 7, 2005, 40, 46, available at <www.af.mil/shared/media/document/AFD-060726-037.pdf>.

⁵ Lambeth, 199.

⁶ Lambeth, 165. The Khowst-Gardez region includes Shahi-Kot Valley.

⁷ Lambeth, 174.

⁸ Correspondence with Colonel George Bochain, USAF, 10th Mountain Air Liaison Officer, March 21, 2007.

⁹ The Battlefield Coordination Detachment in the Combined Air Operations Center received an "advisory 28-page operations order" on February 20. General Moseley, touring the region at this time, did not receive a full briefing on the plan until February 23, just 5 days prior to D-Day. See Lambeth, 170–172.

¹⁰ For an analysis of communication to the CFACC regarding *Anaconda*, see Lambeth, 170–174.

¹¹ Correspondence with Bochain.

¹² Sean Naylor, *Not a Good Day to Die: The Untold Story of Operation Anaconda* (New York: Penguin, 2006), 74.

¹³ Lambeth, 185.

¹⁴ Lambeth, 192.

¹⁵ Rebecca Grant, "The Echoes of *Anaconda*," *Air Force Magazine* 88, no. 4 (April 2005).

¹⁶ Many of these caves ended up being bombed anyway, as American troops called in airstrikes after taking fire from caves. See Robert H. McElroy, "Fire Support for Operation *Anaconda*," *Field Artillery* (September/October 2002), 5–9.